Remistus

(bef. 437 – 17 September 456)

BRIEFING

Remistus (died 17 September 456) was a general of the Western Roman Empire and commander-in-chief of the army under Emperor Avitus.

LIFE

Remistus was a Goth, as shown by his Germanic name. In 456 Remistus reached a high military rank under Emperor Avitus, who probably appointed him magister militum, and received the rank of patricius: he was the first magister militum since the death of Aetius in 454 and the first barbarian commander-in-chief of the Roman army.

The newly appointed general took up residence in Ravenna, the capital, with a group of Goths. That same year Avitus, who was opposed by the Roman Senate, decided to leave Italy and go to his native Gaul to gather reinforcements; Remistus remained back to control Italy. He clashed with the Senate army, led by the Italian magister militum Ricimer and was forced to return to Ravenna; besieged, he was captured and put to death in the Palace in Classis, just outside the city, on September 17.

The following month, Avitus was deposed and later died.